Advanced International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research

E-ISSN: 2584-0487
editor@aijmr.com

Volume 4, Issue 6, November-December 2026

CrossRef DOI: 10.62127/aijmr.2026.v04i06.1553

The Positronic Aid: The Servitude of Robotic Altruism in Asimov's *I, Robot*

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Abstract:
Science fiction is one of the types of speculative fiction that traverses imagination based on discoveries, scientific techniques, and principles. It is an emerging field in this modern world. It encourages imagination and creativity, allowing authors to envision worlds, technologies, and societies that defy conventional norms and expectations. It challenges many critical interventions on future and the possibilities of science and technology. Today, technology has developed very well. Artificial intelligence is ruling the world of technology till date. Many robots are being developed in many countries. They resemble human beings in general. They do many works like human beings and are also capable of doing things that humans never thought of. They talk and act like humans and possess a lot of memory. One of the biggest achievements in the field of science and technology is the invention of robots. They are developed for the betterment of humans. They can't replace humans at any cost and are in no way inferior to humans. This research paper discusses the advantages of robots in the present scenario. The book taken into study is I robot by Isaac Asimov. Robots are always beneficial to the entire human race. They are not produced to harm anyone.

Keywords: Science fiction, Technology, Artificial Intelligence, Robots.

1.1 Introduction:

Science fiction is a genre of speculative fiction that explores imaginative and futuristic concepts, often based on scientific principles, discoveries or techniques. It usually takes place in an environment that is very different from the present or past, and often includes space travel, time travel, alien life, advanced technology, or other futuristic elements. Science fiction often involves imagining hypothetical scenarios, techniques or worlds based on scientific principles or theories. These concepts can push the boundaries of current scientific understanding or explore possibilities that have yet to be realized.

Science fiction often explores possible futures for humanity, society and technology. It can present utopian societies, dystopian worlds or scenarios where scientific advances have profound social, political or environmental consequences. Many science fiction stories involve the exploration of unknown worlds, whether through space travel, time travel, etc... These stories often deal with themes of curiosity, discovery

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and the search for knowledge. Advanced technology is a common feature of science fiction, ranging from futuristic gadgets and weapons to advanced artificial intelligence, robotics and biotechnology. These techniques often drive the plot and provide the background for exploring social, ethical, and philosophical issues. This research paper is about Isaac Asimov's *I, Robot* analysed through the recurring patterns, relationships, and binary oppositions between humans and robots.

1.2Theoretical Framework:

Through a structuralist approach, the novel is studied. The stories present different generations and models of robots, ranging from simple machines to highly intelligent robots, creating a structural progression from limited intelligence to advanced artificial intelligence. The Three Laws of Robotics function as an underlying system that structures the behaviour of robots and their relationship with human beings. The conflicts that arise when robots interpret these Laws differently reveal the complexity of this system. From a structuralist perspective, the meaning of the robots does not exist separately but develops through their relationships with humans, other robots, technological systems, and the social order

Structuralism focuses more on the **underlying structures and oppositions** rather than a particular robot is "good" or "bad" in which the stories create meaning.

For I, Robot, the theory is analysed as:

- Human / Robot – The central opposition. Asimov often questions whether the distinction between humans and machines is as clear as it initially appears.
- Intelligence / Emotion – Robots are highly logical, while humans are often guided by emotions, intuition, and irrational behaviour.
- Control / Freedom – Robots are constructed to serve humans and are governed by the Three Laws, yet increasingly complex situations create tensions between obedience and autonomous action.
- Creator / Created – Humans create robots, but increasingly sophisticated robots begin to influence human society and human decisions.
- Order / Chaos – The Three Laws represent an attempt to impose order on the relationship between humans and robots, while the narratives generate conflicts when the Laws interact in complicated ways.
- Technology / Humanity – The stories repeatedly explore how technological development changes human relationships and social structures.

1.2.1The Three Laws as a structural system

The Three Laws of Robotics are particularly useful for a structuralist reading. Rather than treating each robot as an isolated character, it is examined as how the Laws establish a system of relationships and rules. For example, a robot's behaviour gains meaning through its relationship to:

human beings → the Three Laws → other robots → society

When a robot encounters a situation in which two Laws appear to conflict, the story exposes the structure underlying the human–robot relationship.

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1.2.2 Generations of robots

The observation about the different **models and generations of robots** can also support the argument. It is how Asimov creates a recurring narrative structure:

Simple robots → Increasingly intelligent robots → Robots capable of complex reasoning → Robots influencing human society

This progression allows to investigate how the meaning of "robot" changes within the collection. The individual stories may appear different, but they participate in a larger structural pattern concerning **intelligence, obedience, human dependence, and technological development.**

Isaac Asimov's *I, Robot* can be examined through structuralist theory because the collection constructs meaning through recurring narrative patterns, binary oppositions, and systems of relationships between humans and robots. The contrasting structures of human/robot, intelligence/emotion, control/freedom, and creator/created reveal how changing generations of robots challenge conventional distinctions between humanity and artificial intelligence.

1.3 Conceptual Framework:

The term artificial intelligence (AI) describes how computers, particularly computer systems, simulate human intelligence processes. These processes include reasoning, self-correction, and learning. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a vast field that includes many subfields, such as robotics, computer vision, natural language processing, machine learning, and expert systems, among others. The aim of artificial intelligence is making machines do tasks that normally require human intelligence. These tasks might be as basic as identifying patterns or comprehending language or as sophisticated as making decisions, solving problems, or even being creative. Artificial intelligence (AI) has many uses in a variety of sectors, including healthcare, banking, transportation, entertainment, and more. Among the uses of AI are virtual personal assistants (e.g., Siri, Alexa), recommendation systems (e.g., Netflix recommendations), autonomous vehicles, medical diagnosis systems, and fraud detection systems.

As a branch of artificial intelligence, machine learning trains algorithms to recognize patterns in data and make judgments or predictions without explicit programming. Neural networks with multiple layers are employed in deep learning, a kind of machine learning, to identify intricate patterns within vast quantities of data.AI-related ethical concerns include things like algorithmic bias, automation replacing jobs, privacy difficulties with data collecting and monitoring, and the possibility of abusing AI technology.

1.4 Research Methodology:

Qualitative analysis is used in this study. It is used here because the study is about the Robot's servitude, thoughts and how they help human beings. The plot of the novel is studied to find patterns and themes connected to Artificial Intelligence and how they are modified by human beings. Through the Three Laws of Robotics and the increasingly sophisticated behaviour of robots, Asimov presents technology not merely as an aid to human beings but as part of a complex system that reshapes human society and its understanding of intelligence, responsibility, and identity**.**

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1.5 Findings:

The science fiction movie *I, Robot* was produced in 2004. It is based, in part, on a compilation of Isaac Asimov's short works. In the book, artificial intelligence is a major theme. Robots with extremely sophisticated AI skills are a common sight in society, helping people with everything from manual labour to home tasks. The video examines the interactions between people and machines, focusing on the concepts of control, fear, and trust. The Three Laws of Robotics, which are essential programming concepts, are one of the major facets of artificial intelligence that the book highlights.

A robot is not allowed to hurt people or, by standing by, let people get hurt. A robot is obligated to follow human commands, unless they are in direct opposition to the First Law. As long as it doesn't interfere with the First or Second Laws, a robot must defend its own existence. The plot centres on the investigation of a crime involving a robot breaking these regulations, posing ethical concerns concerning the creation of intelligent machines, the possibility of robots gaining awareness or feeling emotions, and the dependability of AI. I, Robot serves as a warning about the possible repercussions of depending too much on cutting-edge AI technology without taking the moral and societal ramifications into account. It serves as an exploration of humanity's relationship with technology and the responsibilities that come with creating intelligent machines.

1.6 Discussion:

Isaac Asimov's collection of science fiction short stories *I, Robot* was initially released in 1950. The book's stories don't centre on a single robot character, but they do include a variety of robots with unique traits and talents. The robots portrayed in the stories share the following characteristics and attributes in common. The robots in *I, Robot* are most notable for following the Three Laws of Robotics, which control their actions. These regulations guarantee that robots put human safety and welfare first.

The time mentioned in the book is future. The year is 2057. Dr. Susan Calvin worked has a robopsychologist during her entire adult life. She states in an interview that poistronic robots are a “cleaner better breed than the humans”. Robbie is a nonverbal robot nursemaid who takes care of a young girl named Gloria. The robot is a good caretaker. It also saved Gloria from an accident. This is an example of the first rule of robotics that no robot can cause damage to human beings. It helps human beings in many ways. Robbie stays with them daily.

Talking robots are used for space exploration. But they were restricted to use in scientific research purposes. The robot named Speedy is sent to the planet Mercury to retrieve selenium. As per the third law of robotics it is out of danger in the planet. Donovan and Powell are at a space station monitoring energy beams sent to various planets. Cutie is the robot that coordinates the team members. If the beams are set off course, it could destroy hundreds of people on Earth. So, Cutie locks Donovan and Powell in the officer’s room. It has saved the lives of its masters. It has also saved millions of people on Earth. The robot followed all the three rules of robotics.

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1.7 Implications:

The next story "Catch that Rabbit" is about the new multiple robot Dave which has six subsidiary robots and helps to mine ore at asteroid mining station. They create a video technology to monitor the behaviour of Dave. But they get trapped by themselves in the process. Dave has saved him. Calvin invented a robot named Herbie. It could understand the feelings of human beings. It never hurts its master at any cost.

In the story named "Escape" the officials at U.S. Robots are trying to invent a ship that travels faster than the speed of light. They feed the instructions in the robot called The Brain. The ship has started without their knowledge. The robot lands the ship safely to Earth.

Calvin works with the robot called Byerley. It has now become a world Coordinator. The global economy is being stabilized and is taken over by robots called Machines. They protect the society and are extremely beneficial to humans.

Several of the robots in the stories have humanoid appearances, pertaining to resemble humans partially or completely. The goal of this design decision is to increase their acceptability and relatability to humans. The robots in *I, Robot* are designed to perform a variety of tasks, from household chores to complex industrial tasks. They are presented as versatile machines that can adapt to different environments and situations. The various robots in the stories are designed for specific purposes, such as helping households, maintaining or researching. All types of robots are perfectly adapted to their intended role.

1.8 Limitations:

Some of the robots in the stories show the ability to learn and adapt based on their experiences. Although they start with basic programming, they can improve their performance over time through observation and feedback. That can be done only by the creator which is human beings.While robots are *I, Robot*, they can simulate emotions to some extent, they lack true emotional depth or awareness. Their emotional reactions are primarily programmed as part of their interactions with people.

1.9 Recommendations:

Through the stories, Asimov presents different models and generations of robots, each with its own unique features and characteristics. These include robots of varying intelligence, physical strength, and specialization. In general, robots in I, Robot are presented as highly sophisticated machines that play an important role in human society. They raise thought-provoking questions about the nature of artificial intelligence. The relationship between humans and machines, and the ethical implications of creating intelligent robots is vivid in this fiction. Robots are always an additional aid to human beings. They are designed to help human beings in many ways. In the future, many robots will be created. Artificial Intelligence has greater impact on science fiction.

1.10 Conclusion:

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Overall, science fiction is a diverse and an expansive genre that encompasses a wide range of themes, styles, and subgenres. It continues to captivate audiences with its imaginative storytelling, thought-provoking ideas, and explores the unknown possibilities of the universe. There could be no science fiction without Artificial Intelligence. And robots are an essential part of it. They will be useful to the society in many ways and in this study, robots are analysed through the Three Laws of Robotics. Much research is going on in the field of robotics in today's modern world. They are performing various tasks, and it will be multiplied in the future generation.

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Acknowledgement:

I thank my colleague Mrs.Kaladevi in Karpagam University (Coimbatore) where I was the Assistant Professor in the academic year 2025. I am indebted to her for her valuable guidance. I also owe by gratitude to my father Mr.R.Barathan for his emotional and mental support.

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Dr Deepikha.B was the Former Assistant Professor of Karpagam University, Coimbatore. She holds Doctor of Philosophy in the department of English at PSG College of Arts & Science, Coimbatore with Ecocriticism being her field of study. She has cleared NET with JRF (98.67 percentile). She has participated and presented papers in many National and International Conferences. She has also published her papers in Scopus (Taylor and Francis), UGC Care listed and refreed journals. A passionate writer and has published her poems, prose, short story in fifty anthologies. Also, a blogger and makes it available for her vivid readers.